

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed December 31, 2007, claims 9-18 were allowed, claims 3-5 and 22-32 were objected to, and claims 1, 2, 6-8 and 21 were rejected. Claims 3-5 and 22-32 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, but were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Bharthulwar (U.S. Pat. No. 5,847,904). Claims 2 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Bharthulwar in view of Fontana et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,609,948). Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Bharthulwar in view of Shouji et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,722,157).

Claim Objections

Claims 3-5 and 22-32 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, but were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. With the present Amendment, claims 3 and 22 have each been rewritten in independent form, incorporating all of the limitations of the base claims from which they previously depended. Thus, the objections to claims 3 and 22 should be withdrawn. Claims 4 and 5 depend from amended claim 3, and claims 23-32 depend from amended claim 22. Thus, the objections to those claims should likewise be withdrawn. Notification to that effect is requested.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Bharthulwar (U.S. Pat. No. 5,847,904).

Amended independent claim 1 recites a method of forming a magnetoresistive (MR) reader with planar top shield topography and low parasitic resistance. The method includes defining a stripe height back edge of a MR sensor of the MR reader, and subsequently defining a physical reader width of the MR sensor. According to amended independent claim 1, the physical reader width is defined by a distance between opposite side edges of the MR sensor.

The present amendments to independent claim 1 make clear that the “physical reader width” is a physical property defined by a distance between opposite side edges for the MR

sensor and not an electrical width defined by electrical current contacts located adjacent to the MR sensor.

The present amendments to the claims make clear that Bharthulwar, alone or in combination with any of the other prior art of record, does not show, teach, disclose or suggest each and every limitation of amended independent claim 1. The interpretation of Bharthulwar given in the Office Action cannot read on the present claims, because according to that interpretation Bharthulwar discloses a reader width or track width (TW) defined only through the deposition of conductors (current contacts). The current contacts of Bharthulwar are not deposited subsequent to the definition of the physical MR sensor width as recited in the claim.

Thus, the rejection of claim 1 under §102 should be withdrawn. Notification to that effect is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Bharthulwar (U.S. Pat. No. 5,847,904) in view of Fontana et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,609,948). Also, claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Bharthulwar in view of Shouji et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,722,157).

Claims 2, 6-8 and 21 all depend from amended independent claim 1, and include all of the limitations of that base claim. Therefore, for the reasons given above with respect to amended independent claim 1, dependent claims 2, 6-8 and 21 are likewise allowable over the cited art because neither Fontana et al. nor Shouji et al. supplies the missing limitations of Bharthulwar. Notification to that effect is requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the claims are now in condition for allowance. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0982.

Respectfully submitted,

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